

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 INR-07 CIAE-00 DHA-02

L-03 H-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /043 W

-----110608Z 003633 /10 L

O 110522Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9532

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: SHUM, RP

SUBJECT: TINIDAD HERRERA CASE

REF: MANILA 7079

1. FULL TEXT OF LETTER SENT BY FORMER SENATOR SOC RODRIGO TO DEFENSE SECRETARY ENRILE MAY 9, ALLEGING TORTURE OF MRS. TRINIDAD HERRERA FOLLOWS: BEGIN TEXT. DEAR SECRETARY ENRILE: I AM WRITING THIS LETTER IN MY CAPACITY AS LEGAL COUNSEL FOR MRS. TRINIDAD HERRERA WHO IS AT PRESENT UNDER DETENTION AT THE BICUTAN REHABILITATION CENTER WHERE SHE IS ALSO LISTED AS "TRINIDAD GERILLA Y BAKAL".

2. THE PURPOSE OF THIS LETTER IS TO REPORT TO YOU MY FINDINGS THAT SAID CLINET OF MINE, MRS. TRINIDAD HERRERA, HAS BEEN THE VICTIM OF PHYSICAL TORTURE, SPECIFICALLY, ELECTRIC SHOCK APPLIED ON HER RIGHT AND LEFT THUMBS BY CERTAIN MILITARY PERSONNEL. THIS WAS TOLD TO ME BY MRS. HERRERA HERSELF, WHEN I VISITED HER AT BICUTAN CENTER YESTERDAY MORNING, SUNDAY, MAY 8, 1977. SHE SHOWED ME THE MARKS OR SCARS OF THE ELCTRIC BURNS ON THE SKIN OF HER TWO THUMBS, WHICH WERE STILL PLAINLY VISIBLE. THERE WERE WITNESSES PRESENT DURING MY CONVERSATION WITH HER. THEY HEARD WHAT SHE TOLD ME; AND THEY SAW THE ELCTRODE MARKS. THE WITNESSES AND

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THEIR REPSECTIVE ADDRESSES ARE THE FOLLOWING:

1. DR. RAUL V. IDEA - MANILA DOCTORS HOSPITAL
U.S. AVENUE, MANILA
2. SISTER ANGELINA, RGS-WELCOME HOUSE
1641 ZAMORA ST.
PACO, MANILA
3. MRS. VERONICA ALCALA - 58 C.M. RCTO EXTENSION

TONDO, MANILA

4. M. ANNIE LAVIDES - 191 DULO PUTING BATO

TONDO, MANILA

3. I HURRY TO SEND YOU THIS LETTER IN ORDER TO REQUEST IMMEDIATE INVESTIGATION OF THIS ATROCITY BEFORE THE ELECTRODE MARKS ON MRS. HERRERA'S THUMBS DISAPPEAR.

4. PERMIT ME TO ACQUAINT YOU WITH MY OTHER FINDINGS ON THIS CASE, BASED ON MY OWN INVESTIGATIONS FROM THE TIME MY SERVICES WERE ENGAGED LAST MAY 5, 1977.

5. IT APPEARS THAT MRS. HERRERA WAS ARRESTED ON APRIL 25, 1977, WHILE SHE WAS WALKING AT KATIPUNAN AVENUE. SINCE THEN, UP TO THE TIME I WAS CONTACTED BY SOME OF HER RELATIVES AND FRIENDS LAST MAY 5TH, NO OUTSIDE WAS ALLOWED TO VISIT OR SEE HER. I WAS TOLD THAT, ACCORDING TO INFORMATION, SHE WAS AT BICUTAN CENTER.

6. ON THE AFTERNOON OF MAY 6, 1977, I AND MY SON, ATTY. FRANCISCO E. RODRIGO, JR., MOTORED TO BICUTAN. WE ARRIVED AT THE BICUTAN COMMAND OFFICE AT ABOUT 3:20 P.M. WE INFORMED THE OFFICER IN CHARGE THAT WE WERE THE LAWYERS OF MRS. TRINIDAD HERRERA, AND THAT WE WANTED TO CONFER WITH HER. WE WERE INFORMED THAT THERE WAS NO DETAINEE BY THAT NAME IN SAID CAMP. WE WERE REFERRED TO THE OFFICE OF THE VI RECAB AT CAMP CRAME.

7. WE MOTORED TO CAMP CRAME; AND, PRESCINDING FROM DETAILS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WE WERE TOLD BY THE PERSONS IN CHARGE AT THE RECAB OFFICE THAT MRS. TRINIDAD HERRERA WAS THE SAME PERSON LISTED IN THEIR FILES AS TRINIDAD GERILLA Y BAKAL; BUT THAT SHE WAS NOT IN THEIR CUSTODY. THEY ADVISED US TO INQUIRE AT THE COC OFFICE AT THE MAIN BUILDING.R

8. WE MOTORED TO THE COC OFFICE, WHERE WE WERE INFORMED THAT MRS. TRINIDAD HERRERA, WHO WAS ALSO LISTED AS TRINIDAD GERILLA Y BAKAL, WAS UNDER THE CUSTODY OF METROCOM. WE WERE ADVISED TO GO BACK TO THE VI RECAB OFFICE. THIS, WE DID.

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 INR-07 L-03 CIAE-00

DHA-02 H-01 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 /043 W

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O 110522Z MAY 77

FM AMEMBASSY MANILA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9533

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9. BACK AT THE VI RECAP OFFICE, WE WERE FINALLY SHOWN A COPY OF A RECEIPT FOR APPROXIMATELY SIXTY (60) DETAINEES WHO WERE DELIVERED TO BICUTAN SOMETIME ON MAY 3, 1977. THE NAME "TRINIDAD GERILLA Y BAKAL" APPEARED ON THE LIST AS NO. 57.

10. ARMED WITH THIS INFORMATION, WE MOTORED BACK TO BICUTAN, WHERE WE ARRIVED AT AROUND 6:00 P.M. WE WERE INFORMED AT THE COMMAND OFFICE THAT THEY DID HAVE A DETAINEE BY THE NAME OF TRINIDAD GERILLA Y BAKAL, BUT, THAT SHE WAS SICK. WE SAID THAT, WITH MORE REASON, WE WANTED TO SEE HER.

11. WE WERE INFORMED THAT THE REGULATION WAS FOR LAWYERS TO CONFER WITH THEIR CLIENT-DETAINEES AT THE COMMAND OFFICE; NOT IN THE STOCKADE. I OFFERED MY CAR DRIVEN BY MY SON, TO FETCH MRS. HERRERA FROM THE STOCKADE. BUT, THE CAR CAME BACK WITHOUT MRS. HERRERA. WE WERE TOLD THAT SHE WAS TOO ILL TO BE MOVED FROM THE STOCKADE.

12. WE THEN INSISTED IN GOING TO THE STOCKADE TO SEE HER. WE REQUESTED THAT WE BE ALLOWED TO TALK PERSONALLY TO HIGHER RANKING OFFICERS IN THE COMMAND OFFICE. WE WERE FINALLY ALLOWED TO GO UP TO THE SECOND FLOOR, WHERE WE MET MAJOR CAGUIOA AND COLONEL SALAYA. AFTER WE EXPLAIN-

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ED OUR MISSION TO THEM, THEY GAVE US PERMISSION TO GO TO THE STOCKADE TO VISIT MRS. HERRERA.

13. MRS. HERRERA, WHOM I HAD MET PERSONALLY A FEW YEARS AGO, WAS A PITIFUL SIGHT WHEN WE SAW HER AT THE STOCKADE. SHE WAS IN A STATE OF SHOCK. SHE WAS HAGGARD AND EMACIATED; AND HER EYES WERE BLANK AND EXPRESSIONLESS. IT TOOK TIME

BEFORE SHE SHOWED SIGNS OF RECOGNIZING ME. I FOUND IT ALMOST IMPOSSIBLE TO COMMUNICATE WITH HER. SHE HARDLY RESPONDED TO MY GREETINGS AND QUESTIONS. ON THE FEW OCCASIONS THAT SHE SHOWED SIGNS OF COMPREHENSION, I NOTICED AN EXPRESSION OF FEAR ON HER FACE. THE FEW STATEMENTS SHE MADE WERE EVASIVE AND INCOHERENT.

14. WHEN I LEFT, I MADE UP MY MIND TO GET A DOCTOR-SPECIALIST TO EXAMINE AND TREAT HER. UNPON INQUIRY FROM FRIENDS, DR. RAUL V. IDEA, A NUEROLOGIST, WAS RECOMMENDED TO ME.

15. I WENT TO BICUTAN LAST SUNDAY, MAY 8TH, WITH DR. IDEA AND SISTER ANGELINA. ONLY I, AS LAWYER OF MRS. HERRERA, WAS GIVEN PERMISSION TO ENTER THE SOTKCADE. MAJOR CAGUIOA TOLD US THAT HE COULD NOT GIVE SUCH PERMISSION TO EITHER DR. IDEA OR SISTER ANGELINA. HE SAID THAT WE HAD TO ASK THIS FROM THE COMMAND OFFICE AT CAMP CRAME.

16. LUCKILY HOWEVER, DR. IDEA, SISTER ANGELINA, AND I WERE ABLE TO SEE AND TALK TO MRS. HERRERA, WITHOUT ENTERING THE STOCKADE. WHEN WE ARRIVED AT THE STOCKADE PERIMTER, WE SAW HER STANDING BEHIND THE WIRE-MESH FENCE, TALKING TO TWO LADY VISITORS WHO WERE STANDING OUTSIDE THE FENCE, NAMELY MRS. VERONICA ALCALA AND MS. ANNIE LAVIDES, WHOSE NAMES I HAVE MENTIONED ABOVE AS WITNESSES TO MY CONVERSATION WITH MRS. HERRERA.

17. I WAS PLEASANTLY SURPRISED TO SEE THAT MRS. HERRERA LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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HAD RALLIED FROM HER SHOCK. SHE WAS STILL PHYSICALLY WEAK, BUT ALREADY MENTALLY ALERT.

18. IT WAS THEN AND THERE THAT SHE RECOUNTED TO ME AND TO THE FOUR (4) WITNESSES ABOVEMENTIONED THE ELECTRIC SHOCK TORTURE INFLICTED ON HER; AND SHE SHOWED US THE TELL-TALE MARKS OF THE ELECTRODES ON HER THUMBS. SHE TOLD US THAT THE ELECTRIC SHOCK TORTURE WAS INFLICTED ON HER WHILE SHE WAS UNDER DETENTION AT MIU (MILITARY INVESTIGATION UNIT), CAMP CRAME.

19. I AM PROMPTED TO REPORT THIS MATTER TO YOU, NOT ONLY BY MY DUTIES AS MRS. HERRERA'S LAWYER, BUT ALSO BY MY FEELING OF COMPASSION AND SENSE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, AS A HUMAN BEING. I EARNESTLY HOPE THAT YOU WILL FORTHWEITH TAKE PROPER ACTION, EXPECIALLY IN THE WAKE OF THE RECENT PROTESTATIONS OF THE ADMINISTRATION THAT IT DOES NOT KNOWINGLY COUNTENANCE PHYSICAL TORTURE OF DETAINEES. AND, THIS CASE INVITES SPECIAL ATTENTION, CONSIDERING

THAT THE VICTIM IS A LADY. PLEASE ACCEPT MY BEST WISHES.
VERY TRULY YOURS, (SGD.) F. SOC RODRIGO. COPY FURNISHED:
PRESIDENT FERDINAND E. MARCOS, MALACANANG, MANILA; GENERAL
FIDEL RAMOS, CAMP CRAME; GENERAL PROSPERO OLIVAS, CAMP
CRAME; GENERAL GUILLERMO SANTOS, JAGO, CAMP AGUINALDO;
JAIME CARDINAL SIN, VILLA SAN MIGUEL, MAJDALUYONG; METRO
MANILA; CATHOLIC BISHOP'S CONFERENCE OF THE PHILIPPINES,
MANILA, PHILIPPINES; NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHRISTIAN
CHURCHES OF THE PHILIPPINES, MANILA, PHILIPPINES; ASSOCIA-
TION OF MAJOR RELIGIOUS SUPERIOS, MANILA, PHILIPPINES;
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL, LONDON, ENGLAND;
THE PRESS, LOCALAND INTERNATIONAL. END TEXT.
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